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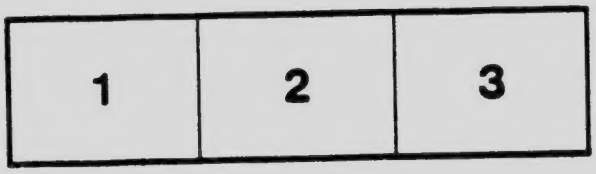

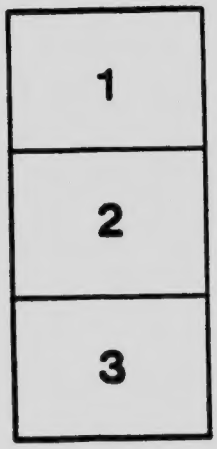

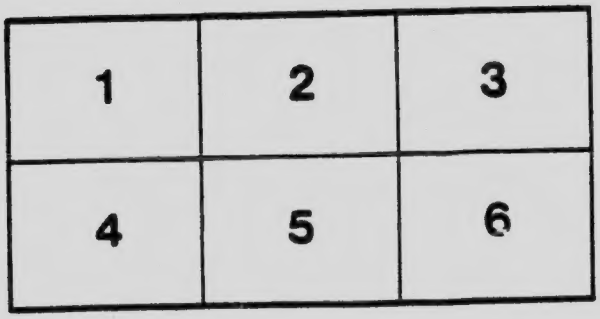

A CO-ORDINATING INDEX SYSTEM FOR PARLIAMENTARY RECORDS

By ROBT. C. DUNBAR

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While the Canadian system of parliamentary reporting compares favorably with the systems of other English-speaking countries, the published records of the proceedings of the Senate and House of Commons are of less value as works of reference than they would be if complete indices, in convenient form, were published concurrently. The daily record of the proceedings of Parliament is spread over five different publications, the Minutes and Hansard of the Senate and the Votes and Proceedings and revised and unrevised editions of the Hansard of the House of Commons. No indices to any of these publications are issued until after the close of the Session to which they relate, so that to trace the course of any piece of legislation through the records, or even to refer to a particular speech during the Session in which it is delivered, is a tedious and unsatisfactory undertaking.

The establishment of an efficient concurrent index which would co-ordinate all branches of the record, so that at a glance the course of a debate or of a piece of legislation could be traced, would undoubtedly facilitate the work of members and officials of Parliament and of solicitors, newspaper men and others who have occasion to refer to parliamentary records. Such an index would necessarily be kept on cards, in the same manner as library catalogues, etc., in order that each day's proceedings might be entered immediately on their publication.

As there is a sharp distinction between public and private legislation it would be desirable to have separate indices for the two classes of legislation. Thus, to make the

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indexing system complete, it would be necessary to have a general index by subjects to the Hansards of the two Houses on such a blank form as "Form A," on which a note could also be made of any reference to the Minutes of either House, in the case of a division or resolution.

For private bills, such a form as "Form B," would be of great value. Public and Government Bills could be entered on similar forms, perhaps omitting the reference to and from Committees.

To index the proceedings of each House by speakers, such a form as "Form C," could be employed, the name of the speaker being placed on the top line at the left of the card and each subject on which he speaks being written on a separate line, with the Hansard references in the columns provided. References to the Minutes of the House could be made on this form, without providing a special column.

SUBJECT	COMMONS			SENATE	
	NAME OF SPEAKER	HANS. (U)	HANS. (R)	NAME OF SPEAKER	HANS.

	COMMONS				SENATE		
	DATE	V. & P.	HANS. (U)	HANS. (R)	DATE	MINUTES	HANS.
1ST READING							
2ND READING							
REF. TO COM. ON							
REP. FROM. COM.							
COM. OF W. HSE.							
3RD READING							
R. ASSENT							

FORM **B**

Hans. (U)	Hans. (R)

Form C